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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/680,604	10/06/2000	Dan Matheson	10003655-1	9577
22879 7590 05/30/2008 HEWLETT PACKARD COMPANY P O BOX 272400, 3404 E. HARMONY ROAD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION FORT COLLINS, CO 80527-2400				
EXAMINER CABRERA, ZOILA E				
ART UNIT 2123		PAPER NUMBER		
NOTIFICATION DATE 05/30/2008		DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/680,604

Applicant(s)

MATHESON, DAN

Examiner

Zoila E. Cabrera

Art Unit

2123

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 April 2008.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 21-34 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 21-34 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 21-23 and 25-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Eichstaedt et al. (US 2005/0228703 A1).

As for claims 21-23 and 25-34, Eichstaedt discloses:

21. (New) A method for handling an issue related to a design of product using a computer a system that allows collaboration between a plurality of users, the method comprising:

storing a question related to the issue, wherein the question is provided by a first user of the plurality of users ([0099], i.e., a request for a quote); storing an answer related to the question, wherein the answer is provided by a second user of the plurality of users ([0101]-[0103]; and storing a decision made based on the answer, wherein the decision is made by a third user of the plurality of users ([0069]; [0104]).

22. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the plurality of users interacts with at least one of the question, the answer, and the decision via a graphical user interface ([0104]; Fig. 10).

23. (New) The method of claim 21, further comprising: implementing the decision for this issue into the design; and forming the product from the design ([0013];[0134]).

25. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein each of the question, the answer, and the decision are stored in a separate relational database, the method further comprising: using foreign keys to maintain associations between each of the question, the answer, and the decision ([0088]).

26. (New) The method of claim 21 further comprising: storing at least one association between at least one of the issue, the question, the answer, and the decision, and another of the issue, the question, the answer, and the decision ([0099]-[00104]).

27. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein storing at least one association comprises: storing an association of the question with the decision along with the question ([0104]).

28. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein storing at least one association comprises: storing an association of the answer with the question along with the answer ([0101]).

29. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein storing at least one association comprises: storing an association of the decision with the answer along with the decision ([0104]).

30. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein storing at least one association comprises: storing an association of the issue with the question ([0099]).

31. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein there are a plurality of questions related to the issue and a plurality of answers related to the plurality of questions ([0083]).

32. (New) The method of the claim 31, comprising: storing an association for each answer of the plurality of answers that indicates that each answer of the plurality of answers is associated with only one question of the plurality of questions ([0099]-[0104]).

33. (New) The method of the claim 31, comprising: storing an association for each question of the plurality of questions that indicates that each question of the plurality of questions is associated with the issue ([0099]-[0104]).

34. (New) The method of the claim 31, comprising: storing an association for each question of the plurality of questions that indicates that each question of the plurality of questions is associated with the decision ([0099]-[0104]).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eichstaedt et al. (US 2005/0228703 A1) in view of Thackston (US 6,295,513).

As for claim 24, **Eichstaedt** discloses the limitations of claim 21 but fail to disclose the limitations of claim 24. However, **Thackston** discloses such limitations as follows:

24. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the storing of the question, the answer, and the decision is in a tool-neutral persistent form (Col. 5, lines 47-51).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of the ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of **Eichstaedt** with **Thackston** because it would provide an improved system that maintains engineering data, such as design documents and three dimensional model data, in a common, neutral format, which is accessible by authorized team members through a graphical user interface (**Thackston**, Col. 3, line 64 – Col. 4, lines 4)

Conclusion

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Zoila E. Cabrera whose telephone number is 571-272-3738. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST (every other Friday).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Rodriguez, can be reached on 571-272-3753. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/ZEC/
May 29, 2008

/Zoilá E. Cabrera/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2123